

403: Regular Presence in Long Term Care Facilities

- A. The LTCOP shall seek a regular presence in all long term care facilities in order to monitor the conditions of residents, provide information regarding the LTCOP, respond to requests for assistance, and insure resident access to an ombudsman.
- B. Each Regional LTCOP shall observe the condition of residents during routine visits to facilities.
 - 1. Routine visits to facilities shall be unannounced.
 - 2. Timing of routine visits shall be staggered so that facilities have no basis to predict the timing of the visit.
 - 3. All LTCO personnel shall document observations after each facility visit and maintain such documentation within LTCOP records in accordance with this Manual and instructions from the SLTCO.
 - 4. LTCO observations of conditions in the facility which adversely affect the health, safety, welfare or rights of residents shall be documented as ombudsman-initiated complaints. (refer to Section 501(E)(3) of this Manual, if no other person has lodged the complaint)
- C. All LTCO shall provide information regarding the LTCOP during all visits to facilities.
 - 1. Each Regional LTCOP shall confirm that facilities post the LTCOP poster in multiple, conspicuous public places within the facility accessible to residents, visitors, and staff and in an easily readable format, with the address and telephone number of the SLTCOP (Senior HelpLine) and the Regional LTCOP.

Depending on the facility floor plan, several posters may need to be posted to meet this requirement.

2. Each Regional LTCOP shall make available an adequate supply of LTCOP brochures to provide to residents and their representatives.
3. All LTCO shall explain the purpose of the LTCOP and introduce themselves to residents in the facility, particularly to any leaders of the facility's resident council and attempt to see residents who have been admitted since the LTCO's last visit.

D. The LTCOP shall insure resident access to an ombudsman.

1. Within the available staffing resources, LTCOP presence in facilities should be as frequent as possible in order to assure residents access to an ombudsman to address concerns.
2. Regional LTCOP presence should be increased in facilities in which there is a history of serious or frequent complaints; a change in ownership or leadership that raises concerns about facility operations; imposition or threatened imposition of a substantial state or federal sanction or remedy; bankruptcy; a report made by the facility, such as quality indicators, that raise concerns about facility operations; closure; at the request of the Office; or for any other reason necessary to serve resident interests as determined by the Regional Ombudsman. Each Regional LTCOP shall keep the Office informed of facilities that are the subject of increased visitation and are priority homes according to the Regional LTCOP Annual Services Plan.
3. The Regional LTCOP shall visit each facility with

Nursing Home Care Act licensed skilled and intermediate care beds within its service area at least once per calendar quarter to complete the tasks outlined in this Section.

4. A visit for the purpose of investigating a complaint, working with the resident or family council, presenting an in-service for facility staff, participating in an annual survey or any other program related reason may be made simultaneously with a routine visit to maximize efficient use of time, resources, and opportunities to address resident problems and concerns.